

continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:47 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. David Hicks, USA, Deputy Chief of Chaplains, U.S. Army; Shirley Dobson, chairman, National Day of Prayer Task Force; James C. Dobson, founder and president, Focus on the Family;

Luis Palau, president, Luis Palau Evangelistic Association; Col. Joseph Wallroth, USAF, Wing Chaplain, Andrews Air Force Base; and Julie Keim, soloist, Washington National Cathedral. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. The National Day of Prayer proclamation of April 30 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Exchange With Reporters Aboard the U.S.S. *Abraham Lincoln* May 1, 2003

[*The President's remarks are joined in progress.*]

President's Flight Aboard Navy One

The President. —No, it was not me.

Q. [*Inaudible*—land it?

The President. Not my first time on a carrier.

Q. How was your——

The President. Really exciting. I miss flying, I can tell you that.

This is a formal press conference that you're now conducting. This counts.

Q. Not when we're dressed like this, it doesn't. [*Laughter*]

The President. That's right.

Q. Mr. President, when you were flying the plane, what did you do? Did you steer it?

The President. Just steer it.

Q. Did you go straight, or did you turn it?

The President. Straight.

Q. How did you do? Did you waver?

The President. Ask the pilot.

Q. He won't tell.

Q. How does it compare to the jets you used to fly?

The President. Huh?

Q. How does that compare to the jets you used to fly?

The President. Much more sophisticated.

Q. What's it been like here on the ship?

The President. Huh?

Q. What have you been doing on the ship?

The President. I've mainly been talking to the troops.

Naval officer. Here they come, sir.

[*At this point, a squadron of Navy fighter jets flew over.*]

The President. The press conference is over.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 2:10 p.m. on the navigation deck of the U.S.S. *Abraham Lincoln* at sea off the coast of San Diego, CA. In his remarks, the President referred to Comdr. John "Skip" Lussier, USN, pilot of the S-3B Viking aboard which the President traveled to the aircraft carrier. The press release issued by the Office of the Press Secretary did not include the complete opening remarks of the President. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.